

Futures: Updated Plan Gets Legislative Approval

An updated Mental Health Futures Plan won approval this week from both the Futures Group and the Legislature's Mental Health Oversight Committee. A draft of the plan (which is posted with March 17 documents on the Mental Health Update web page) was presented to the Futures Group on Monday, eliciting discussion and general approval with suggestions for change. A revised draft (posted with March 24 documents) was approved by the legislative committee on Wednesday. The committee gave approval to the Department of Buildings and General Services for the next phase of architectural and design work for inpatient services (the BGS plan also is posted).

The revised Futures plan include a new inpatient program (one primary site with one or two smaller capacities), community recovery residential (sub-acute) programs, a secure residential program, crisis beds, peer services, transportation, housing, and a care management system. Wednesday's action provides clear legislative endorsement to proceed with appropriations and program development. The plan will now be presented to the Legislature's Joint Fiscal Committee for similar approval. Draft minutes of the March 20 Futures Group meeting are posted on the Mental Health Update web page.

Futures: Potential Residential Recovery Program Announced

Representatives from a consortium of designated agencies have announced plans to locate a Community Recovery Residence at what is now the Autumn Harvest Inn in Williamstown. A letter notifying the Futures Group of the proposal is posted on the Mental Health Update web page. The consortium consists of Clara Martin Center in Orange County, Howard Center in Chittenden County, and Washington County Mental Health. Representatives of the consortium, developer Peter Holmberg, who intends to lease the property to the consortium, and state officials briefed local legislators last Friday, briefed Williamstown officials on Monday afternoon, and then appeared before the Williamstown Select Board on Monday evening. Community informational forums and meetings with neighbors are planned.

Futures: Care Management Minutes Posted

Draft minutes of the March 10 Care Management Work Group are posted on the Mental Health Update web page.

Futures: Actuarial Consultant To Meet With Stakeholders

Representatives of TMG, the consultant working with the Futures actuarial contractor Milliman to assess Vermont's psychiatric inpatient bed needs, will meet with stakeholders on Monday and Tuesday. TMG's role is to assess the relative impact of Vermont's community service system on the projected need for psychiatric beds. A series of meetings will be held on Monday at Stanley Hall in the Waterbury State Office Complex with representatives of NAMI-VT, of the designated agencies and the Vermont Council of Developmental and Mental Health Services, of the Futures Inpatient Work Group, and of the main Futures Advisory Group. On Tuesday, in Conference

Room 2B of the Health Department, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington, meetings will be held with Health Department staff and with representatives of Vermont Psychiatric Survivors.

Efforts are underway to arrange additional meetings between TMG and the Futures Care Management Work Group, and also between TMG and the designated hospitals and the Vermont Association of Hospitals and Health Care Systems. TMG's list of questions for these meetings is posted with March 17 documents on the Mental Health Update web page.

Group Recommends Expedited Court Scheduling for ONH Motions

A group of stakeholders met on Wednesday to come up with recommendations to the Court Administrator's Office regarding how and when hearings are set for motions to modify or revoke Orders of Non-Hospitalization (ONH).

Attendees were Wendy Beininger, (Attorney General's Office), Rick Hammer (Washington County Mental Health – WCMH), Michael Hartman (WCMH), Nick Emlen (Council on Developmental and Mental Health Agencies), Kristin Chandler (AG's Office), Laura Ziegler (advocate), Michael Sabourin (advocate), Christine Bilbrey (AG's office), Ed Paquin, (Vermont Protection and Advocacy), Jeff Rothenberg (Clara Martin Center), and Jack McCullough (Mental Health Law Project).

The group agreed that the current system would be greatly improved if the courts would hold a status conference 7-10 days after the filing of a motion, and a hearing within 30 days. The group also agreed to recommend allowing requests for expedited hearings in urgent case cases. The recommendations will now go to the Court Administrator's Office for further discussion.

Seminar Offered on Legal Impediments to Patient Care

A seminar titled "Legal Impediments to Patient Care" will be presented by Ryan Peirson, M.D. from noon till 1:30 p.m. on Thursday, March 23, in the Medical Director's Office, Vermont State Hospital in Waterbury. The seminar is part of the series in public psychiatry sponsored by the University of Vermont's Division of Public Psychiatry and the Vermont Department of Health. Bring your own lunch. To join by conference call dial 1-877-278-8686 and enter the participant code 0248095.

Upcoming Meetings

- **Vermont State Hospital Futures Advisory Group**
 - *NEW*: April 17, 2-4:30 p.m., Hazen Notch Conference Room, Waterbury State Office Complex.
 - May 15, 2-4:30 p.m., Skylight Conference Room, Waterbury State Office Complex.
 - June 26, 2- 4:30 p.m., Skylight Conference Room, Waterbury State Office Complex.

- **Futures Clinical Care Management Work Group** (*Please note change of date*)
 - NOTE CHANGE: ~~April 7~~ April 28, 9-11 a.m., Skylight Conference Room, Waterbury State Office Complex.
- **Futures Residential Recovery (sub-acute) Work Group** (*Please note change of locations*)
 - April 5, 9-11 a.m., Washington County Mental Health Services, ~~9 Heaton Street, Montpelier~~ 2 Moody Court, Waterbury (green building east of railroad station).
 - April 26, 9-11 a.m., Washington County Mental Health Services, ~~9 Heaton Street, Montpelier~~ 2 Moody Court, Waterbury (green building east of railroad station).
- **Futures Facilities Work Group (With Architecture+)**
 - April 3, 1-4 p.m., Room 3B, Health Department, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington.
 - May 22, 1-4 p.m., Room 3B, Health Department, 108 Cherry Street, Burlington.
 - June 12, all day, for presentations; various locations to be announced.

VSH Census

The Vermont State Hospital census was 48 as of midnight Thursday night. The average census for the past 45 days was slightly less than 49.
